

Fall 1988

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Valparaiso University

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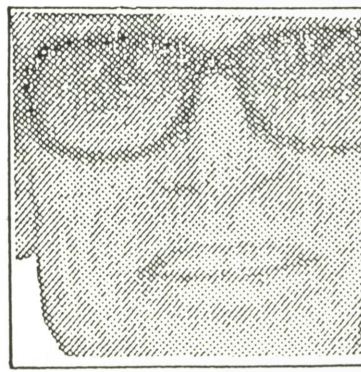
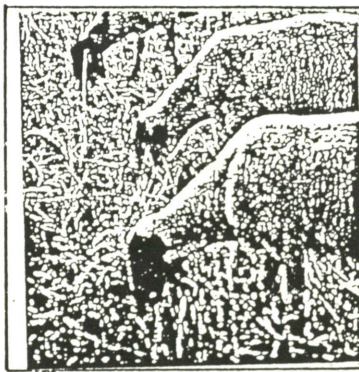
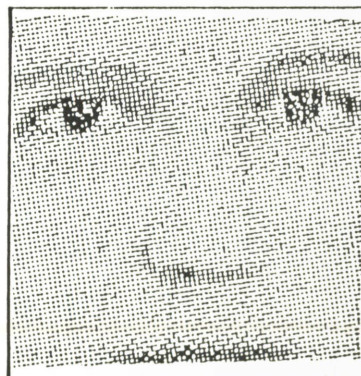
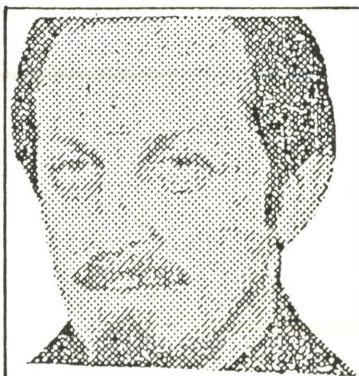
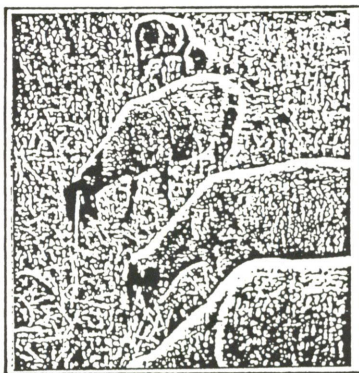
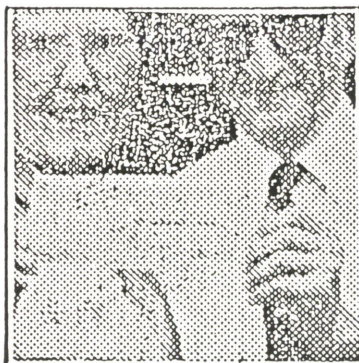
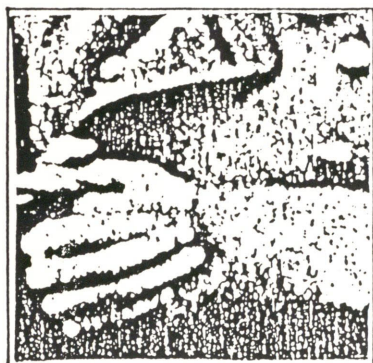
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the lighter



**The
Volume**

34

Issue

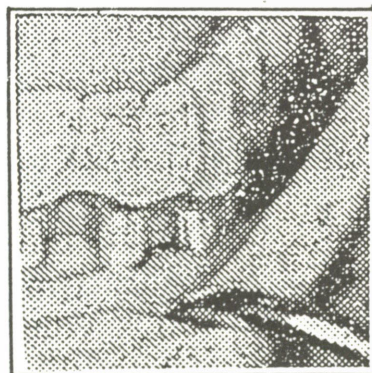
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Fall

**Lighter
1988**

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Sometimes Life...

Sometimes life
is such a trip
It shoots you down
just like a crip
Sometimes life
can be a joke
Make you drink
and take a smoke
Sometimes life
hallucinates
Then it seems to
mediate
Oh, kiss my lips
and touch my skin
force me into
fatal sin
News at six
Sports at five
Bon Jovi dead
Jim Morrison alive
Come on baby
light my fire
Send me Botha
gun for hire
Through it all
the fish head grows
through it all
the mo'jo glows
Hold head high
don't sniff no glue
Just hang def
and get a clue

Daphne L. Pettaway



KS
88

Krista Steinke

Fair Warning

Welcome child!

Child: The voice of the poet, soul covered in dust,
Dreams of perception burnt by the sun.

Tell me, are you fond of the badlands?

The graves of 20 men before you?

The sight of the blind?

Do you see the open night sky?

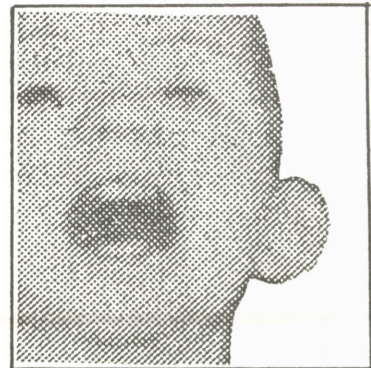
The stolen rib of Madam Memorie,
your torn desire?

Do you hear the sound of conformity and the wailing sirens of doubt?

O' child, don't look down.

It is a long drop.

Andrew Troelsen



Contagious Dream

Helping you meant sharing your pain.
Fearing your reality almost made me stop
But you are the image of a human
Like me.

Something touches me
When you are squinting a smile
Or crying without sound.

Your body is not like others:
Glassy Mongol eyes behind thick frames,
Hearing aid falling out,
Slow, round tongue to express young thoughts.
The parts don't work right.

It would be easier for me
To draw the sun myself
Than to pick up the yellow crayon for you
Again and again
But you demand each step a thousand times.
When I take your hand
You pull all of me in.

Your quiet laugh
The contagious dream
To be happy.

Meg Domroese

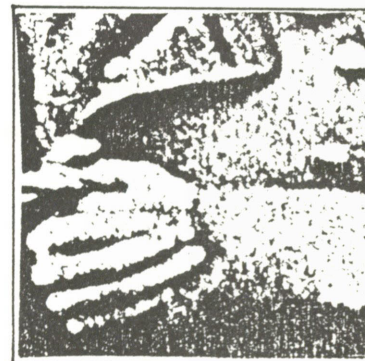
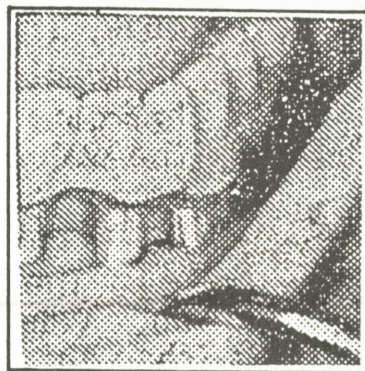
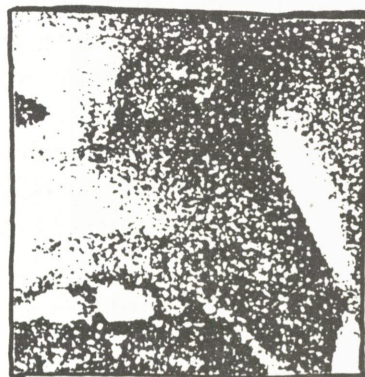
Joyce Jacobson



Asian Vacation

Short timer-old timer, long time ago.
Scenes appear nightly—can't make 'em go.
Forget truth and justice,
 did'em America's way.
Can't understand 'em,
 just make 'em pay.
Tit for tat, and bombs are for Tet.
Much like the Alamo, but can't forget
Making the Triangle with circles and squares;
Bombing the masses from forces in air.
Could break their backs, but never their movement.
World's safe for democracy
 But not for the People
as the Khe Sahns go rolling along.

Jen Haertling

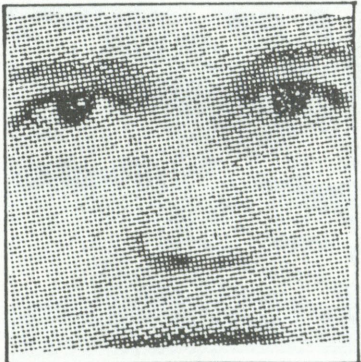


Green Forest

When speaking of old still shots,
ghosts.
she wept for a time that was cold.
A time she remembered for all of us.
Her face still endures the cold,
her eyes still see clean, young soldiers,
and her ears still hear the wind blowing away babies' cries.
The beautiful Aryan babies were long gone by then,
stolen from their mothers by a master race.
Other infants were swung like axes against tall trees
in the woman's forest.

Sometimes my ankles feel cold, imaginary hands
swing me at a tree-
It's not unusual.

Andrew Paul Griffin





Eric Mason

how lite our walk becomes and decisive each breath and
step when there is not ritual routine or any sort
of re-, just one verse with one melody
line (so much direction lacking the
polyphony of reflection) sight
sung with cold coarse vocal
chords, just a string
of incongruities
and unfamiliars
and arcanities
who stretch
beauty
mean
and
be
as
t
e
n
u
o
u
s
as
a wad
of fresh
chewed gum
that draws to a thread
between the hand pulling from the kicking
womb to the hand on the lid of our coffin daily closing

Mitch Hastings

emotional distance
 kept
 so i won't cry
 when i leave you
 because i'm too attached.
 and i want to cry
 anyway

David Charles Rivers

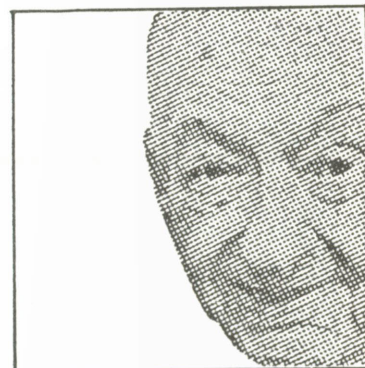
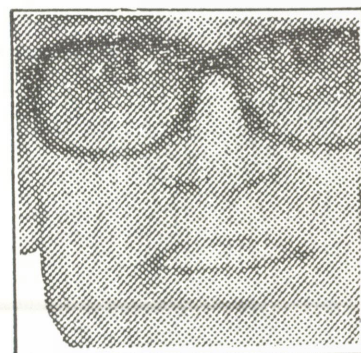
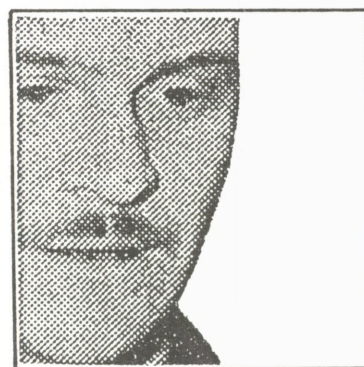
New

The alarm rings
 Crisp and stabbing
 A whitewashed ceiling
 Grabs at my face
 My muscles ache
 It is morning
 This is not my bed.

I wrestle with the sheets
 A peach cocoon
 Shrouds my body
 It is raining
 My legs dangle like dead branches
 Over the edge of the bed
 I hate cold floors
 The alarm screeches insanely.

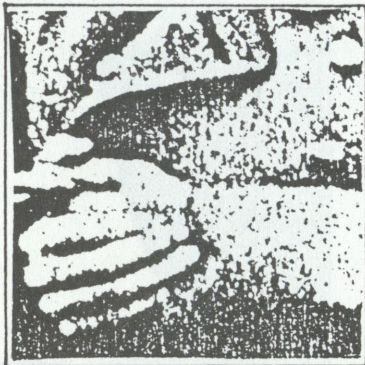
The damp, unfamiliar cubicle
 This is not home
 A brisk wind knocks at the window
 Winter hinted in the chill
 My dreams collapse
 In the waking
 Bleep-bleep-bleep-click
 Silence.

Christy Rueter



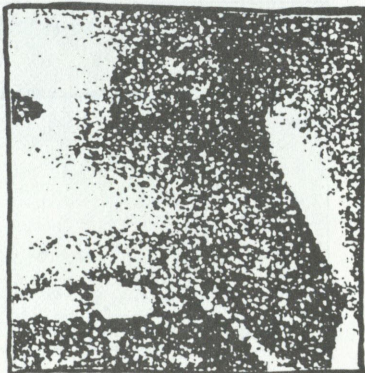
Sundogs

The corn marched past in full parade
of midwest soildiers earthbound souls
But we climbed each hill into the sky
in every valley, lost our stomachs underground

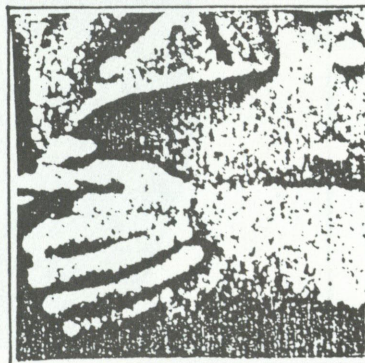


Music moved our working wheels
but Sundogs curse a ceiling
hung over our heads thru windows
Sky should not be framed,
only center us
We chase the sun

Moved to the spreading of the horizon
Trees would fall away
The earth to open
slowly at the shore
God's hand throws the sun
warm into the water
Its path a burning yellow arc
We follow to its crimson hazy end



We lit a fire to its memory
Ashes in memories shifting sand
Time approaches in its swelling waves
Standing still.
We saw out ships of fate
Sailing on alone.



David Doering

A Stroll Across the Sky

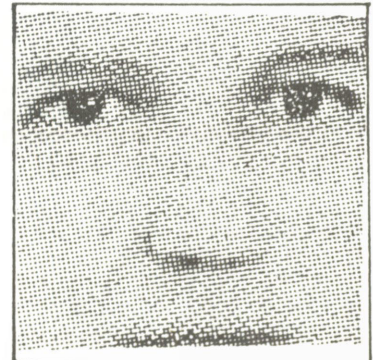
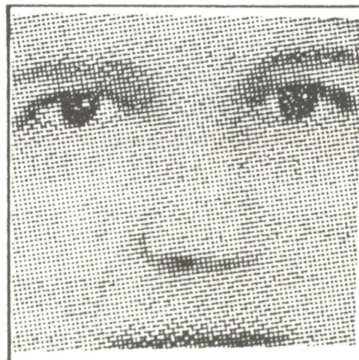
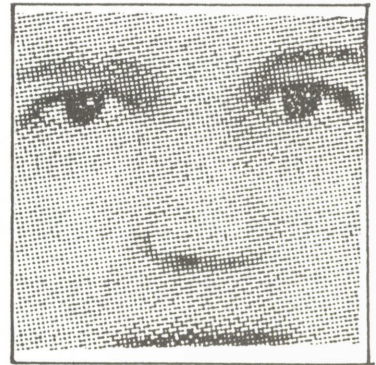
The tree's brain throbbed
With no breeze to cool the pain
Its hazy hair engulfing the sky
Behind, entwined, floated the night eye.

And none escaped the opened eye
It probed the night outstretched wide
The path was cleared
Hands groped out and touched the sky.

The globe grew still and stared
Beyond to the other sphere
Unblinking, rising high.
And peace was there,

For a moment...

Richard T. Gosse





Laura Gatz

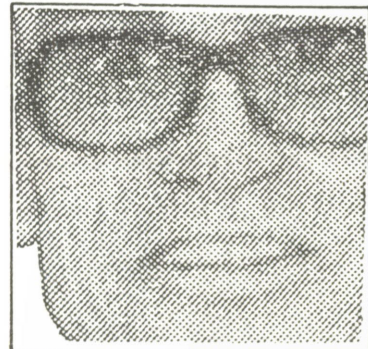
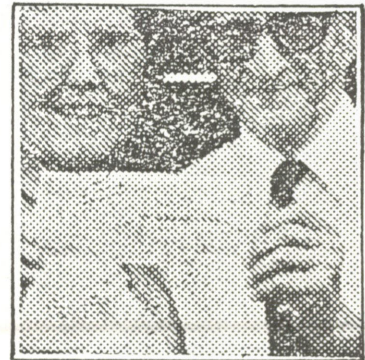
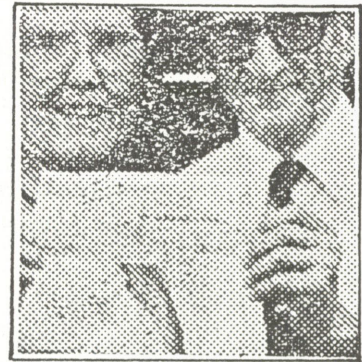
Icarus My Love

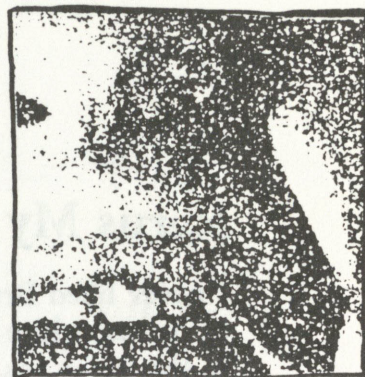
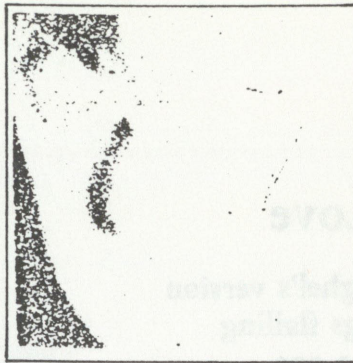
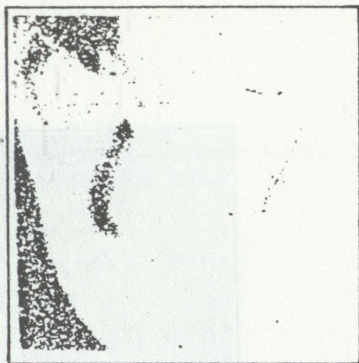
I never liked Brueghel's version of Icarus, white legs flailing in the green sea, no one giving a damn. In my mind, he is frozen, falling and falling while his feet never touch the water. Caught between death and the sun, there is an awful loveliness to melting wax, flying-away feathers, real canvas scream.

Imagine a woman in this story. She is in love, she thinks maybe and he is struck by the way her thin fingers look, curled around a wineglass. They don't quite mesh, these two, because she is too ready to believe and his hands are too white and she isn't even a virgin. So he leaves. Terrified of entangling himself, the only alternative is light.

Remember, Icarus. I am the one who watches, knee deep in the thick water, with drops of (maybe) your last glimmering splash falling from my face. Remember I love you.

Celeste Duder





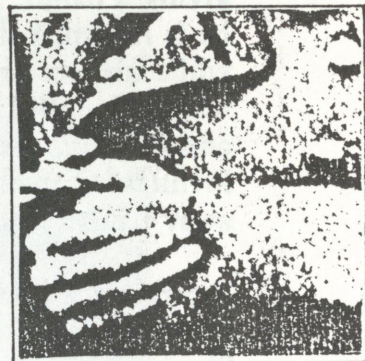
Ever Moving and Ever Still

I am the wave
 Beating furiously
 Returning each time a little different
 But always at home

I am the candle
 That burns for the Virgin
 In the darkness of the cathedral
 Ever moving and ever the same
 Burning as in generations
 And generations past
 Ever moving and ever still

Ever moving I am
 Never the same person that I was
 When I wrote that last line
 But changed by one line
 Ever moving I am
 Still abiding
 Ever constant as I ebb and flow
 Returning to flicker a while
 In the darkness of the cathedral

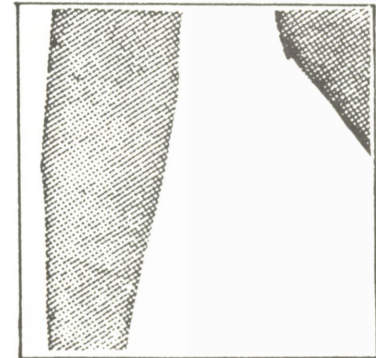
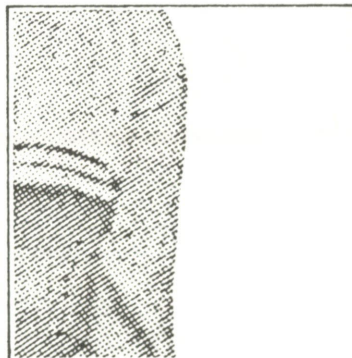
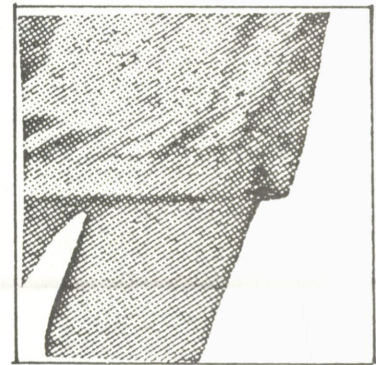
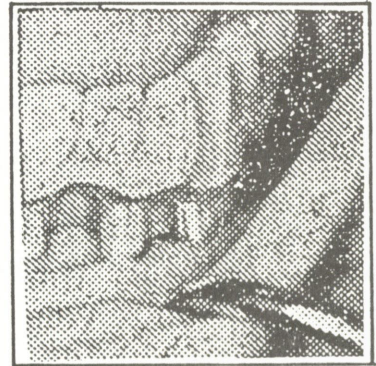
Joyce Jacobsen



Whirling

Everchanging and traveling more
the beauty of soft curls ascend
heavenward as my prayer in the eve.
Colorless, yet beautiful, wing
weave it into intricate patterns and
wind plays it masterfully.
Charming and intimate, it dances
my eyes into a wonderful gaze
and tears escape as witness
to the sweet melody of smoke.

Stephen Williams





Sue Swanson

Ashdance

I.

I have energy, I am energy-
a nervous twitch moving between my skin-
pouncing on a flickering flame I call heart.
A black seed, 30 of them-
they take the dancers and remove them from thought,
into a world I never knew.

Glorious 'spots' and their projecting spirits-
hurled into existence-

carefully avoiding me-
and as the tears again falling happen-
I feel them rip as a meteor into the earth, past my brow-
run red river-

run river, run.

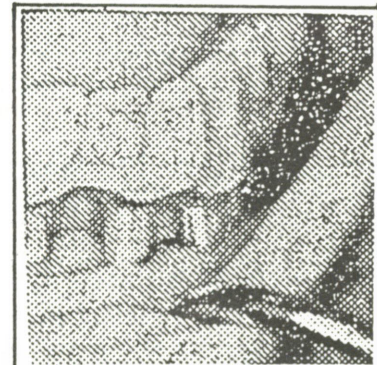
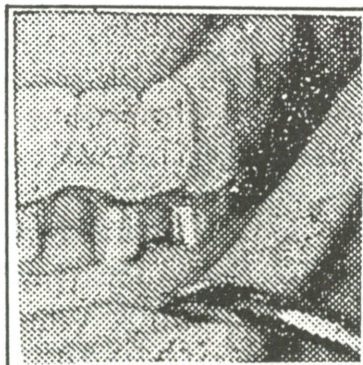
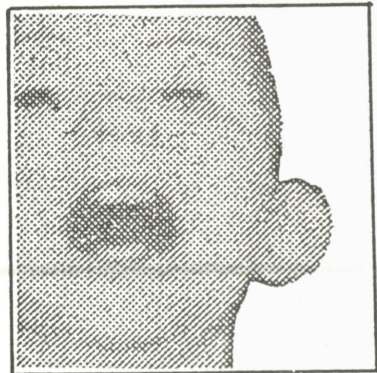
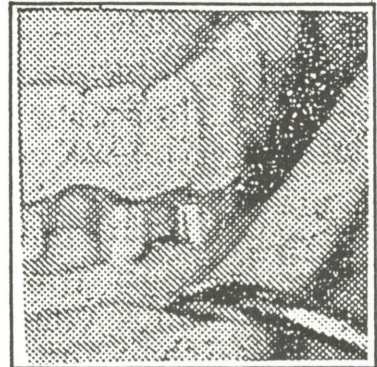
II.

Soot. they know how to pray with ashes, I
pitch them into my inferno. They eat them for dinner.
They roll with the dust, breeze in their hair; thoughts-
whispering past them.

I cough. I suck in the soot.

I choke up lungs, and to my surprise-
an occasional dancer.

Andrew Troelsen



The Witnessing of Michael Athmann

Michael Athmann glanced away from his television to get a view of the car parking on the street outside his kitchen window. He saw a relatively expensive, clean, dark blue, family station wagon with a bumper-sticker that read "What the scripture says holds true *forever*. (Jn 10:35)." The doors opened and two women stepped out, carrying boxes of literature. Mr. Athmann recognized the type; Bible Truthers. He had names for all of them—He's A-Commin'ers, Fear the Lords, and others not quite as polite. These were definitely Bible Truthers. And both of them women. He grunted to himself.

They knocked, but he waited a moment so they would think he'd been in another room reading or sleeping and they were causing him an inconvenience. When he did answer the door, he found two well-dressed women, one about four or five years older than he and the other about four or five years younger. The older woman wore small sensible earrings, a neutral color lipstick, and low black heels—as humbly dressed as a middle-class suburbanite woman can be. The younger woman dressed more elegantly and had long dark hair that parted around her collar to lay on her shoulders like two tiny wings. She was very attractive.

The older woman spoke first. "Hi. I'm Ellen Mund and this is my friend Shelly Lerner. We're just going around doing some Christian work." She pause, expecting to be invited inside, straining to maintain her forced smile. The temperature was below freezing.

Mr. Athmann took this opportunity to introduce himself, "Hi. I'm Micheal Athmann," and gave them a well-rehearsed, perfectly timed, smug, natural little smile. He stood in the doorway, solid as the door itself, inviting no one in. Although, looking at Miss Lerner, he was tempted to.

"Well," Ms. Mund recited, her breath puffing angelic clouds of steam with every word, "religion today is suffering some real problems, isn't it? I'm sure you've seen on the news and on TV all the problems religion has been having. The reason for this is that they're not teaching the real truth from the Bible, are they?" Her habit of ending every other sentence in a question suggested to him that she was a Sunday school teacher, and probably on the bazaar committee. So much the better. "Do you belong to a church, Mr. Athmann?" she asked.

"No."

"Oh. Well, we have with us some literature on the truth of the Bible that we offer at the publishing price of twenty-five cents a copy." She produced two small magazines, "Bible Truth in Today's Religions" and "How the Bible Teaches Us." Ms. Mund read a few passages from each and commented on them in what Mr. Athmann guessed was the most condescendingly polite voice that she could manage, as if to say "Do not be afraid, for I come with good tidings of a great joy" to a classroom of first-graders. He dug two quarters from his pocket and bought a copy of each magazine. The women thanked him and turned back toward their car.

"Could I ask for a little more of your time?" wondered a suddenly friendly Mr. Athmann.

"Excuse me?" questioned Ms. Mund, turning back around.

"I just want to share something with you. Would you care to come inside?"

The two women, although somewhat confused by his request, obliged. Mr. Athmann placed his hand lightly on the younger woman's back as she stepped across the threshold. He led them to the kitchen, had them sit down, served them each a cup of tea, and gingerly placed a piece of shortbread on each of the saucer edges.

Then, excusing himself, he went to his study and grabbed his Bible from the bookshelf. It had no special place there. It was alphabetized by title, like the rest of his books, occupying the space to the right of the Bhagavad-Gita. Returning to the kitchen, he placed it on the table in front of them, face down, so they wouldn't be sure if it was a Bible or some other book. Face down, he thought, it was a concealed weapon, like a gun pointed through a coat pocket. He drummed his fingers on it while he sipped his tea. Setting down his cup, he stared blankly outside, as though doing difficult math in his head. He watched a sparrow fall vertically into the frame of the window, light on a bush, and nervously twitch its head from side to side.

"Sparrows," he said to the women, "two for one penny or five for two pennies—depending on which gospel you shop."

"Pardon me?" Ms. Mund asked.

"'Fear not, you are of more value than many sparrows.' It's in Matthew and Luke, but they charge different prices for their sparrows." The two women looked back, bewildered.

He thought that this might be too easy. Looking back, he remembered a group he'd tagged "True Believers", who had called him "Brother Mike." They had come, nine of them, in their dirty tee shirts and faded blue jeans, travelling in a beat-up station wagon with "Jesus Saves" sloppily painted in large red letters across the side. They hadn't even known much about the Bible, they had just kept professing their faith. Even with his most powerful Bible verses he couldn't combat faith. The day had ended in a stalemate, but Brother Milke invited them back anytime. He'd enjoyed their company.

All at once, he flipped open the Bible, spun it around and pushed it toward Ms. Mund. He'd opened to a chapter in 1 Timothy. "Could you read this please?" he asked her. "Second chapter. Start with the eleventh verse."

Ms. Mund glanced at her apprentice who was straining to see the text and realized that she had no choice.

"'Women should learn in silence and all humility,'" she began. "'I do not allow women

to teach or to have authority over men; they must keep quiet'—This is ridiculous!" Ms. Mund interrupted herself. "This was written thousands of years ago. It's completely irrelevant today," she complained.

Mr. Athmann sat silently and looked consolingly at Ms. Mund, who looked right now like she could use some consoling.

"How can you possibly think you know anything about religion?" she demanded. "You don't even attend a church."

"Exactly," said Mr. Athmann, and grinned.

"Mr. Athmann, I'm going to go home and say a prayer for you." Ms. Mund, close to tears, forced the words from her mouth. "I'm going to pray that you look in here." She tapped the Bible with one finger. "I'm going to pray that you look in here and find the Truth. Because it's in here Mr. Athmann."

"We'll be going now," Ms. Mund concluded. And with that both women made their way to the door, Ms. Mund in a flustered rush, the pretty Miss Lerner quietly following. Mr. Athmann suppressed his urge to watch the young woman from the back as she left the kitchen, choosing instead to stare out the window. The sparrow was gone.

* * *

Leaning forward in his chair, Micheal Athmann handed a signed check over to the Bible-salesman, a kid of about twenty-one, already balding, trying to earn his way through college by selling topical reference Bibles door-to-door. Mr. Athmann considered this practice one of Christianity's most severe corruptions; these kids would never make enough to pay their tuition, they'd get abused at most households, and they really didn't have any idea what they were selling. He knew he shouldn't support it, but he could never let the starving students down.

"Thanks a lot," the young man said, handling the check as though it were fragile, sacred. He carefully inserted it in a leather pouch and started for the door.

Mr. Athmann stood and offered his hand and the two men closed the deal. "You ever read

one of those?" Mr. Athmann asked, indicating the Bible.

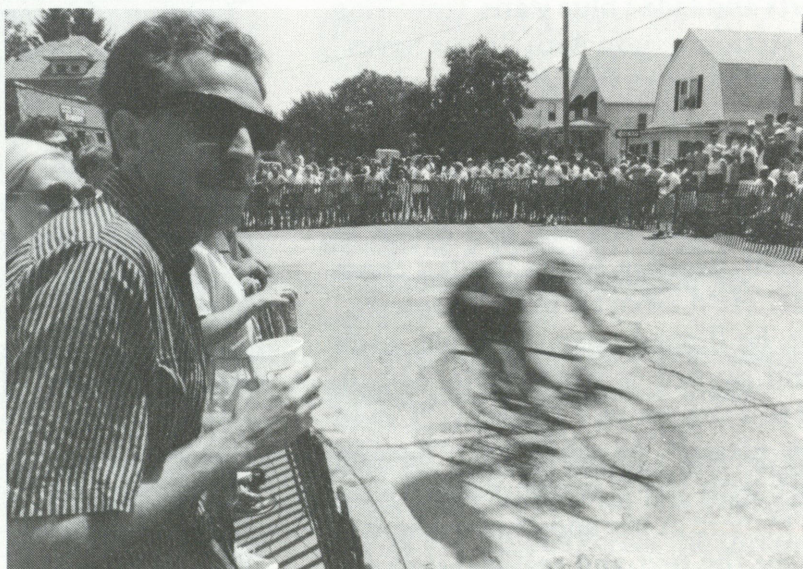
"No," the student chuckled. "But I can appreciate it. It's paying my way through school." Both smiled through the silence that followed, then the younger man added, "Thinking about God only makes me depressed."

"Me too," agreed Mr. Athmann. "But you should read it, you really should."

At this, the student raised his eyebrows, wrinkling his forehead like one of the disciples in a Caravaggio painting.

After the student left, Mr. Athmann lifted his new Bible from the table and felt its weight. Paging through it, he read over his favorite passages to test the translation. He would put the new Bible in his car, he thought. He didn't yet have one there.

Brian Jung



Eric Levin

The Race

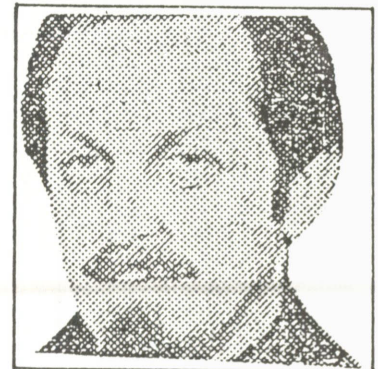
A bang springs
the tensions of my body straight
every muscle stretched
meeting
the water

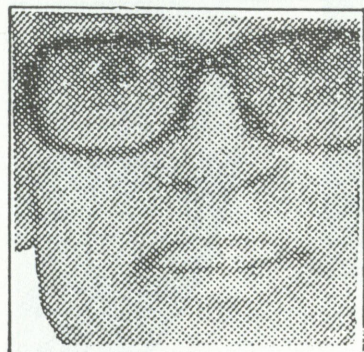
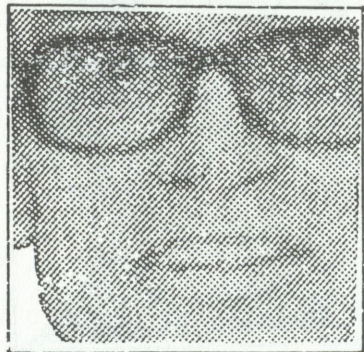
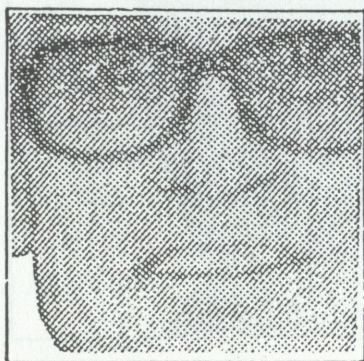
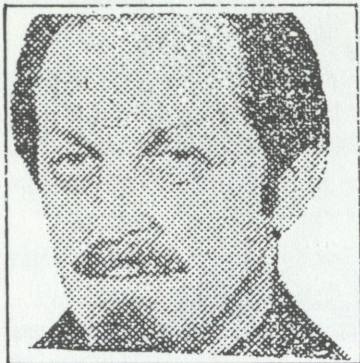
slicing it
feeding my senses
for a split

second I don't know all of it
everything is moving
I hear the ringing in my ears
take a gulp of the crowd cheering
feel the pounding
pounding feet and hands on water
my mind races
as fast as my body
faster
ringing voices pounding colors

my body gasps
pulling from the deepest
resource of my brain
slams to the wall

Meg Domroese





1
the moment has arrived and
it is now there it went.

2
to know is to
be.
and of understanding...?
well that is something
entirely different.

3
progress
produce go
achieve
do
consume
achieve progress
move
produce
consume

go
the
blindfolds
sheeping
efficiently
with
utility
flying
quickly
successfully
from
womb
to
tomb

(past the patches and plots
bearing the beauty of still
and between and
unmoving motion)

4

a love cerebral
 contrived and
 fitting neatly in a package
 is a live benign and
 its happiness
 a glorified degree of
 masking aching emptiness which,
 atop a mountain of props is safe
 from the wave's fingernails
 scabbering away the feet
 of it's clay pedestal,

for a while.

6

see the hobo walking
 no where walking
 back alley scruffy squacking
 all day walking
 brown-bag-purple-red juice talking

"no place to go"

yes no place to go

" 'cept inside"

yes, in there

"away the ache"

the pain the here

"inside"

yes yes, inside away the here
 just away,
 please just a way away

5

karma in a three teired universe

sojourners

we
 whence
 from
 fall
 to
 only
 clouds
 the
 to
 ground

are
 we
 all
 like
 water
 rising
 up
 from
 the

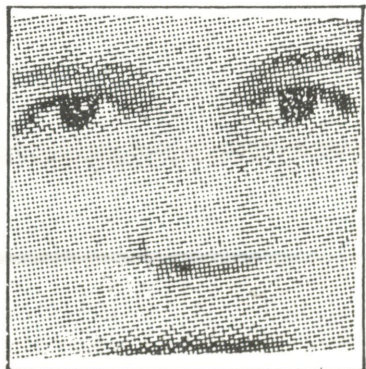
Mitch Hastings

Loiuse S. Whitman

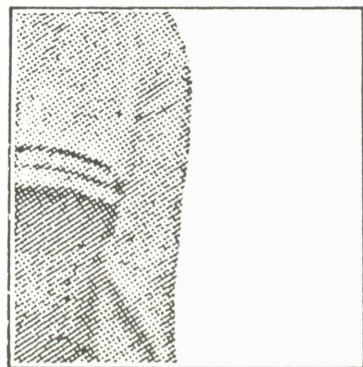
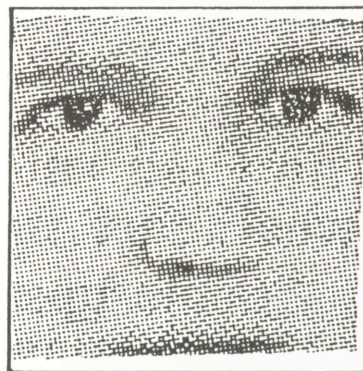


Almost Sunrise

Amazing how it
ends, finally.
After all of what
has passed between
them, she is
simply too tired. Not
merely tired
but so empty
that it takes
the last strength
in her body
to fall alone into bed.
It's almost sun-
rise and they've been
sitting in his car for
years or maybe it was just
a couple of hours.
He insists on love
while she thinks
how nice it would be
to feel him around her,
lights shining through
his baby smooth skin.
It's so very complicated
she can't think anymore
and even though she wants
desperately to love him
there is only the emptiness.



They've had too much
to drink tonight, anyway,
so it all comes down
to the fact that
she would prefer to
walk up the stairs,
unlock her room,
and fall into bed
now this instant
rather than driving
to his place, undressing
together and kissing him
before falling asleep.
It's easier this way and
the evening ends sooner.
She holds him
briefly in the car
as if to say I'm sorry
you had to know this.



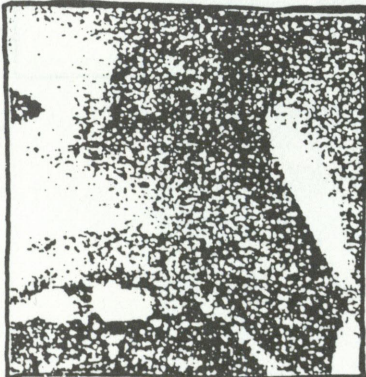
Celeste Duder

any day now, any day now...

got to wonder why there was no goodbye scene this year;
location, sense, and testing spaces, walls like,
kept that play today from going on and on.
a thousand miles rest between blueprint points,
dissection reaction, letting go towards faces, coming
to live inside a life of seeing ghosts and questions,
stuff we never think of happening to each other.

so wonder why there you were
a ghost a block away staring from the leaves
in my old front yard; there never was a goodbye
scene played out then, even for the bones
of friendship. now they're cracked and burned
away, ashes swirling through still green leaves that
bring back your face like a hi-beam over the hill
bouncing off nighttime median yellow. don't pass
on too fast, even when imagination fails stay awhile
and shake hands through my mind's eye to remember
summers years ago wasted in a second.
sadness is gone,
buried with a child's heart and a cold box in June,
there is no aching part inside, no emptiness
needs to be filled, I just wonder why
I saw your face after so much
time has wound around my eyes.

Fritz Eifrig



Trip

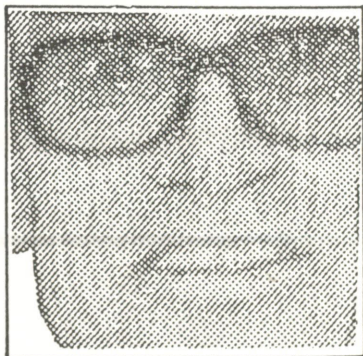
Maybe it was the incense.
 What did he call it?
 At once exhilarating and tranquil,
 a trace tickled my mind
 rousing my Spirit. Yes
 it was the scent I felt first.
 Or the music.
 Melodies weaving into my dreams,
 Harmony flowing into my soul.
 "Remind me to borrow that tape."
 Very Indian, or was it Oriental?
 Anyway, elaborately simple,
 it stole my concentration.
 Rationality gone, Fantasy was mine.
 I lived imagination.
 Maybe for the first time.

Maybe sleeping with her.
 Embracing her carnality.
 Or walking with her
 close to me
 and feeling her human touch
 -more human than people.
 (She is the world, yet not at all worldly.)
 She affected me, elemental.
 I felt substantial.
 Maybe for the first time.



Maybe the pinkorangepurple sky of the sunset
 -once I'd opened my eyes-
 over the greengrayblue mountains...
 Or the bright whitening moon
 full and rising fast behind us.
 The aethereal revealed,
 I knew divinity.
 Maybe for the first time.

He said we were
 Beautiful
 as we slept.
 Being watched without knowing is
 Rare.
 Must have been deep.
 Didn't know I could sleep through these things.
 Didn't know a lot.
 I was happy.
 Maybe for the first time.



Suzanne Albinson



Kim Krizaman

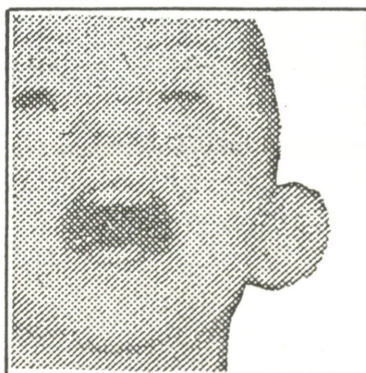
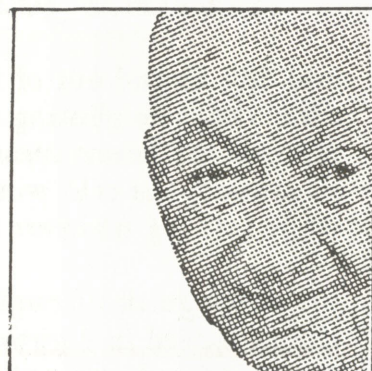
A Passing Car Grunts and Rolls Up Its Windows

The rain waves down on the six
and seven and eight year-old boys and they
turn their head up and laugh and the drops run
into their open mouths and they drink and laugh and spin
because their mothers can't see them.
And a passing car grunts and rolls
up its windows.

The youngest of them
spots a puddle and charges.
Each bounding step destroys
the rain's tiny water ways,
each step anticipates the demise
of the great lake at the end
of his sprint. He leaps, soars, raises
his feet and crashes them down.
From his shoes splashes the water
of childhood, dripping with the love
of rain, with the love of mud.

Yes,
I would love to play in the rain.
I would love to play in the rain if it
weren't for the dribbles that crawl down
my nose or light upon my lips
like pesky flies.

Brian Jung



Arkansas Joan

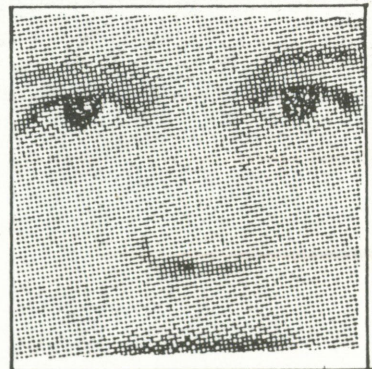
rain falls in and out of light,
 silent choruses glinting across glass
 expanse; car beams spear my head,
 all around, the cold winding vines into my bones
 while soft fog whispers soak my shoes.

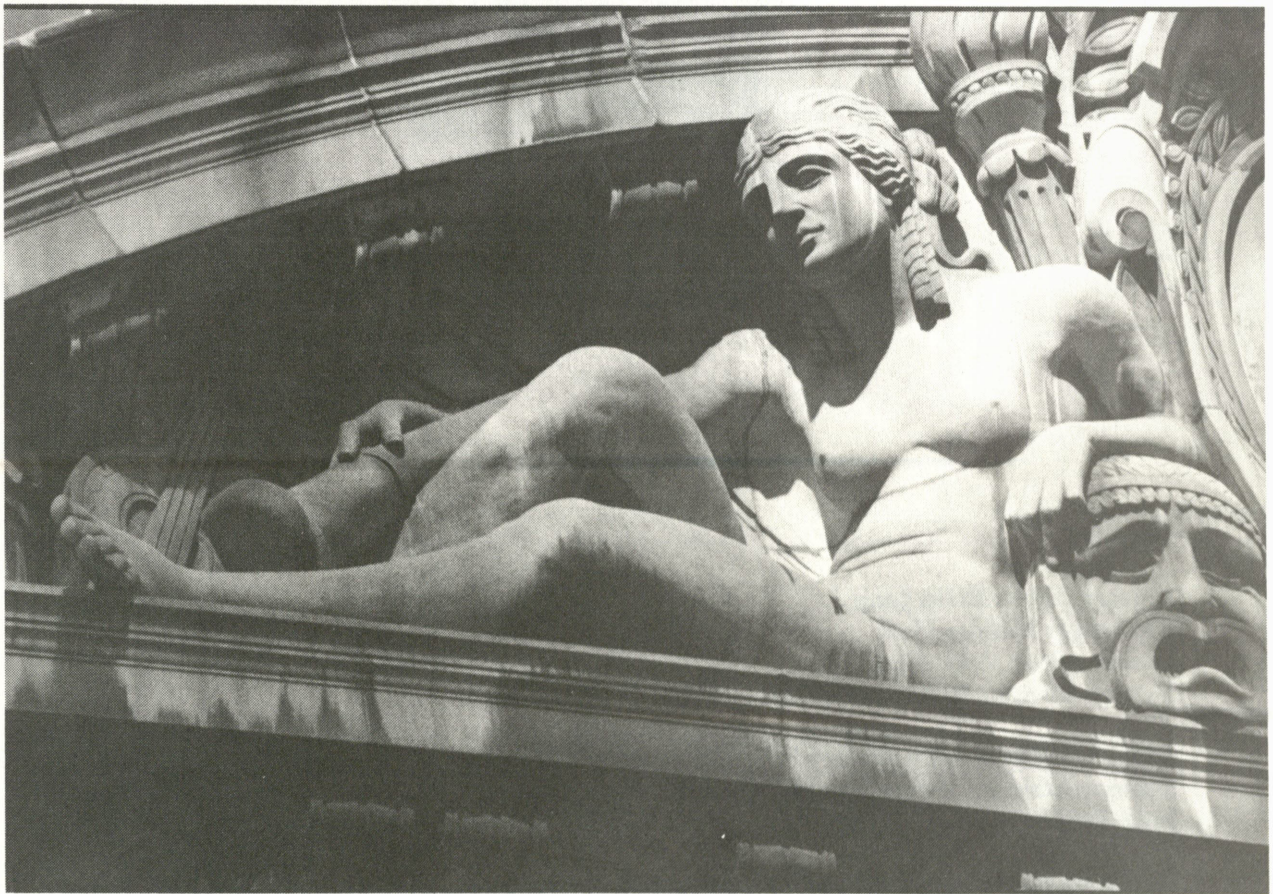
she walks quick through this nod I'm on,
 almost carved in nighttime black and bruise,
 there's a smell of tears around her,
 a high lonesome sound of loss and dark rooms
 salt and empty bottles.

Arkansas Joan—twisting life out the hole in her
 tooth, a last chance dive through troubled sleep.
 telling me about Janis Joplin, and St. Paul the apostle,
 the time she got bounced from a country bar,
 combing out my hair with memories of children
 left behind. crazy twenty years or more.

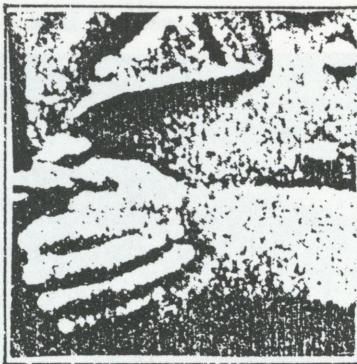
her leather soft skin slips beneath
 the sheets breathing sighs from smiles
 so safe from death. wrapped in the night
 a kiss tastes the scream in her teeth;
 my fingers smell of cocaine melting
 ice scars across her belly, but the mirror's
 in her eyes as she twists away from me.
 I catch the glint of metal and go out to check the knives,
 thinking of bus stations and the beats
 of highway lives rapping amphetamine—
 she sits away, a hundred miles, rocking clutched hands,
 cackling to country radio dreams.
 life isn't always clean, friend.
 life isn't always clean.

Fritz Eifrig





Jayson Mellom



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Special thanks to type setters and lay-out people: Jodi Schlueter, Jill Schlueter, Art Kim, Lydia Brauer, Rick VanGrouw, Joyce Jacobson and Celeste Duder.

Special thanks to Home Mountain Publishing.

Thanks to the *Torch* for the use of its equipment.

Sheep photo on cover, by Laura Gatz.